



Office of Disability Rights
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[Public Comment: Olmstead Plan](#)

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DC Voters for Animals is an advocacy group dedicated to lifting up the policies and politicians doing the most for animals, whether it is companion animals such as cats and dogs, animals in farms and labs, or wildlife. We have a direct interest in seeing DC thrive in making the city the most vibrant and prosperous for animals and their companions. There are many ways to highlight existing successes and opportunities within the Olmstead Plan.

The stated commitment of the Olmstead Plan is to “provide care in the least restrictive setting appropriate for District residents with disabilities”. There is a lot for District residents to feel proud about the thoughtfulness of our city in this plan.

One key step the plan can take is to recognize the role of companion animals. The city has made strides that should be recognized and highlighted. And there are considerations with companion animals that relate to the mental health and housing components of the new plan.

The plan omits a key accomplishment of the DC government; admitting companion animals in housing for seniors and those with disabilities. In doing so, the government recognized the important role that non-human animals can play in one’s well-being. This should be featured and celebrated in the Olmstead Plan.

The plan also has an opportunity to clarify a key component of housing access. People with companion animals are particularly vulnerable to housing insecurity. This is because the majority of housing in DC does not allow pets.¹ And the majority of public housing units prohibit companion animals,² making about two thirds of public housing units.³

In its effort to strive for stable housing, the Olmstead Plan should unequivocally call upon the need for a policy that is more accommodating and inclusive. By creating a public housing vision that is more flexible for those with companion animals, DC can strike down another barrier to stable housing for those most in need.

¹ <https://wtop.com/real-estate/2017/09/dc-rent-among-nations-highest-apartments-pet-friendly/>

² FY2021 Moving to Work Plan <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/DCHAFY21Plan.pdf>

³ <https://www.aspc.org/about-us/press-releases/aspc-and-humane-rescue-alliance-welcome-improvements-dc-housing-authoritys>



DC

VOTERS

FOR ANIMALS

Sincerely,

Max Broad

President

DC Voters for Animals